

**VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of March 12, 2013**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Chair Kevin T. Beal, Village Trustees Colin T. Bright (absent), Dennis Donahue, Stephen Fitzhugh (absent), and K. David Maxwell. Also present were Village Manager Jay Marcotte, Acting Clerk Ken McCann, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

Chair Beal called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. PUBLIC COMMENT (Scheduled and Unscheduled).** There was none.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. February 26, 2013 (Special Meeting).** Motion by Trustee Donahue, seconded by Trustee Maxwell, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**
- b. February 26, 2013 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Trustee Donahue, seconded by Trustee Maxwell, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**

V. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. Warrant #18-13.** Motion by Trustee Donahue, seconded by Trustee Maxwell, to approve Warrant #18-13 in the amount of \$443,662.99. Trustee Donahue noted that a legal bill arising from an animal control issue is larger than the fine that can be imposed on the dogs' owners. He asked if there was any chance of developing a policy that would allow for the reimbursement of legal bills in addition to the fine. Manager Marcotte stated that he will look into this (which might incur additional legal expenses). He added that the proper legal steps were followed in this case. Chair Beal stated that these particular animals running free constituted a threat to public safety and required immediate action. Trustee Donahue suggested that the Joint Animal Control Ordinance should be amended to add reimbursement for legal expenses incurred. Chair Beal suggested that this matter could be discussed at a future Joint Board Meeting with the Town Selectmen. Manager Marcotte noted that normally these sorts of problems are sorted out without the need to hire an attorney. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Village Common Rehabilitation Project.** Manager Marcotte stated that he had both good and bad news to report tonight. The good news is that the owner of the property on which the Merchants Bank is located has agreed to provide an easement for the proposed work on the west side of the Village Common. The bad news is that he has been informed that the Village will need to commit and pay in advance for the burying of telecommunication lines in that area. This cost has been estimated at \$53,000 but Manager Marcotte will try to obtain a definite amount. Once this has been received, he will present the Boards with several funding options. Trustee Maxwell wants to be sure that the Village Manager is keeping the Town Manager in the loop regarding the anticipated construction timeline, etc. Manager Marcotte confirmed that he has been in constant communication with Town Manager Robert Lewis regarding this project. He also confirmed that the project construction period is still expected to be from mid-September 2013 through mid-November 2013.
- b. Smart Grid Project.** Since Trustee Fitzhugh, who has been spearheading this project, is not present tonight, Manager Marcotte had nothing to report other than the project remains on schedule for completion before the April 2013 deadline.
- c. Streetlight Replacement Project.** Manager Marcotte stated that he had a lengthy conversation with a financial institution that was very interested in funding the anticipated wholesale replacement of the current streetlights with LED fixtures. He added that Utility Office Manager Doug Reed now is getting quotes from Green Mountain Power (GMP) that will reflect the recent reduction in LED fixture costs. He added that there will not be an increase in budgeted costs for this project.

Kathleen Lott asked if there will be any discussion of upgrading the lights in Northfield Falls (as has been requested by the Northfield Falls Community Watch). Manager Marcotte stated that this would be included in the overall project and he will discuss this matter with Manager Lewis.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Labor Day Coin Drop Request.** Chair Beal noted that Northfield Observances has requested permission to hold another coin drop on Labor Day morning (09/02/13) in order to help fund its operation of the annual Labor Day Weekend Festivities. Motion by Trustee Donahue, seconded by Trustee Maxwell, to approve this request. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**
- b. **Joint Board Meeting.** The Village Trustees and the Town Selectmen will meet jointly on Monday, March 25, 2013. A DRAFT agenda was distributed to both boards; it includes discussion topics such as Town/Village Merger, etc. Chair Beal believes that more frequent Joint Board Meetings would be beneficial as Northfield moves towards merger. Trustee Donahue agreed that this would be helpful. Chair Beal noted that the Select Board had previously requested that the possibilities of Northfield-situated medical marijuana dispensary and/or wind power facilities be placed on the agenda of the next joint meeting. Trustee Maxwell suggested that discussion of these matters be postponed until more background information has been collected. He also did not feel that these matters were urgent concerns. Chair Beal agreed that there should be more of a focus on the transition toward a consolidated municipal government. Trustee Donahue suggested that the members of the Merger Committee should be contacted to see if they would like to assist with this process.

VIII. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS

- a. **Municipal Building Security.** Chair Beal would like to maintain the current policy of restricting use of the back door to municipal employees only. He felt that the public should be further encouraged to use the front doors by making sure that they were accessible during night-time meetings.
- b. **Village Report.** Chair Beal stated that he will be submitting in a few weeks the annual report from the Trustees' Chair that will be included in the Village Report. He encouraged his fellow Board members to contact him with any suggestions.

IX. MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. **Railroad Pedestrian Crossing.** Manager Marcotte stated that there have been no new developments on this matter.
- b. **Village Common Lighting.** Manager Marcotte stated that as part of the rehabilitation project, there will be an attempt to match the new light fixtures on the north side of the Common with the ones already in place on the south side. Ms. Lott asked if it were possible to install more natural lighting on the Common. Manager Marcotte will look into this. He also would like the lighting intensity on all sides of the Common to match when the project is done. He added that this sometimes is a problem during a piecemeal conversion to LED lighting. Chair Beal would like Manager Marcotte to keep the Board updated on this matter.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT (Unscheduled). There was none.

XI. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Trustee Maxwell, seconded by Trustee Donahue, to adjourn. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting.